

Maine Learning Results Review Advisory Committee

September 22, 2005

103 Cross Building, Augusta, Maine

In attendance: Anita Bernhardt, Tom Major, Deborah Howard, Karoldene Barnes, Becky Berger, John Wright., Brian Dancause, Bonnie Fortini, Ellen Homes, Francis Eberle, Nancy Perkins, Ellie Multer, Jon Geiger, Josh Nadel, Peggy Rotundo, Dan Hupp

Greetings/ recorder for meeting

The group was welcomed by Anita. [Recorder: Bonnie Fortini]
Anita introduced Ellen Holmes, our new observer from MEA.

Anita reviewed the highlights of last meeting dealing with new groupings and look of LR Standards. Anita also reminded the group that the Advisory Committee is bound by the same level of confidentiality regarding the proposed revised standards as the Content Area Panelists. Ultimately the documents will be posted publicly.

Prior to Review

Content Areas
Clusters
Performance indicators
Examples

At this Point in the Review (following input from the national experts)

Content Areas
Standards – strands?
Performance indicators
Bullets

Discussed the purpose of the bullets, are they examples or guidance?

Nancy brought up the issue of terminology around “bullets” and the implications for confusion for teachers. Performance indicators which are bulleted were perceived to “examples” and the examples are bulleted.

Updates

1. There was a brief discussion of the SAT at grade 11.
2. Anita reviewed the policy decision regarding bullets-(Anita’s 9/14/05 handout for us). The bullets for performance indicators should provide guidance for the depth, breadth and complexity for the instruction. Our current document contains a lot of performance indicator that are of varied complexity, specificity and purpose. The bullets will be more descriptive for the purpose of provided the clarity that has been asked for by the field. We looked at an example from 3-5 grade span.

“Bullets represent parts of an integrated whole,” and describe the essential depth, breadth, and complexity at that level. Schools can go beyond. The MEA and GLE will restrict question design to the particulars described in the performance indicators and bullets. Each performance indicator will be coded for suitability for MEA or LAS, so districts will know which may be included on the large scale assessment.

Josh concerned that the districts understand they can add to the core for their local assessment systems. Ellie wondered if clusters would remain in the new document. Anita felt that the new organization proposed revision may automatically provide this grouping. Josh concerned that measurable objectives don’t match well with depth, breadth, and complexity. He feels the bullets should be called the measurable outcomes from the start. Karoldene suggested that the “developmentally appropriate” piece pulls the depth, breadth and complexity back into the picture. The questions the CAP has been asking about the document have included both “measurable” and “appropriate” awareness in their work.

Anita mentioned that the Alternate Assessment group she met with was pleased with the performance indicator review protocol questions the panels are using. They felt that it would lead to greater access for all students. Becky asked for clarification about what would be on the MEA, the indicator or specific bullets under the indicator? Anita responded that the essential collection of knowledge and skills would have been identified as “fair game” for assessment as they are essential for instruction. This is an excellent question to take to Technical Advisory Committee. Francis raised the issue of clarity of things such as the #3 statement under the explanation of bullets on the handout. This point is included on the Quarterly Summary’s impact list. He suggested that the assessment rubrics will be part of the instructional outcomes.

Tom suggested that “descriptor” might be a better term than bullets.

- Anita recapped what she heard: “bullets” doesn’t “say” what it is and we need to indicate more clearly that we are talking about student performance.
- Districts need to know that they may add to these for LAS, rather than select from.
- Nancy raised concern about districts selecting PIs for their LAS, but that bullets are not a menu from which to sample. We really need clarity about this.
- Deborah noted that if we are struggling with this then there will be confusion in the field if we don’t get clearer. She suggested we reference the rubric work that we’ve done and call the bullets” performance descriptors.”
- Ellen questioned if there is enough clarity and might be better to add SAUs should realize they may add to these “performance descriptors” for their local assessment systems.
- #5 talks about national standards as defined by the state of Maine, John G. suggested we provide the total resource list. Anita restated that we need to look to/align with national standards for [core] essential components we include in our state document.

- Josh suggests we remove “core” as we haven’t defined that word. Jon suggested we stick with essential. John like core as meaning minimum standards for learning results and thought that core was more understandable than essential. Anita recapped that we want consistency in language, and she will attempt to tighten it up and send it out to us.
- Ellie urged us to use words in the same context that the public would understand. The issue of “strands” came up and it may not end up in our final document; it showed up in national documents and with the consultants.
- National experts under contract with: Jim Rutherford (Science and Technology), Ed Colozzi (Career Preparation), Christy Brown (Modern and Classical Languages), Mary McFarland (Social Studies), Wendy Cohen (Visual and Performing Arts) John W. concerned about the engineering focus. Anita and Francis indicated that Jim Rutherford is well known and respected by the Technology and Engineering groups.
- Additions to the MLRRAC- We are seeking to grow our connections to the Education Committee as well as the House and Senate. Peggy Rotundo is currently our link to the Senate. Peggy reported that she just spoke with Libby Mitchell concerning this and Anita added that the Commissioner is taking that information under advisement and we will find out soon.
- Chancellor’s Committee on College Readiness- Anita met with the group and will continue to do so. The writing report has been issued. There is a conference in October, and Tom and one of Karoldene’s high school teachers will be attending, as may Ellie. Math is having similar conversations. Francis and Dan Hupp are members of that group. Bob Fransoza is also involved. There are important crossovers between the groups. Francis wondering how inclusive the college readiness standards are? Are they less than MLR? Need to see where the two tracks fit together. Community College system is also well represented on the commission. Becky raised concern about the number of math phobic students that the university sees. Josh and John talked about the different contexts in which math can be learned or presented. Anita reiterated that we need to keep talking with the Chancellor’s committee, but the work is connected. Our work is going → toward college; theirs is going ← toward high school. It is through mutual acknowledgement of the connections that we can make each of our work more meaningful.
- Publicity and District Resources- Commissioner Gendron has suggested that we hold off from any major publicity until we have something to ask for from the community. When we are ready to post the proposed revised standards for feed back, then it will be a more appropriate time for a media blitz. We will continue to share via the website, and the CAP members have been asked to share with their

content area groups simply for informational purposes about the process.

- Focus Groups- Thanks to Brian Dancause for contacts at the Chamber. Anita will continue to pursue business groups to meet for focus groups.
- Instructional Context Groups- This group continues to refine their focus and connections. Anita handed out a draft document framing the work. This group was approached by Norm Higgins who is working on the National Governor's Association Grant to see where the links are between their work and ours. Norm and Anita want to create parallel structures and common goals where possible.

BREAK @ 11:15

Review Documents

1. Quarterly Summary of Recommended Phase-in and Impact Issues-

- Need to let content panels know that the "bullets" should be called "performance descriptors" because of the historical use of the language
- Change in grade span will alter the alignment. K-4 may be most affected, but all districts will need to consider how this will impact their LAS. Anita said that we will need to be very clear upon release of these documents that the grade span change has happened. Josh suggested that it be included in Updates to districts.
- Decrease in number in bullets, need to include information and rationale, and the changing to descriptors will prompt this discussion.
- There must be professional development to understand the difference between standards and standardization, curriculum and standards. Standards represent end of grade span targets, and we may see the need to generate examples of backing down those end expectations into lower levels of a given grade span. Nancy has great concerns about the PD for teachers and administrators. She wondered if the SAU survey addressed the connection of the PD to classroom practice. She wonders how the PD money from the state is actually used and how it impacts the student and classroom. The impact statement isn't accountable. Ellen explained a bit based on meeting with Patrick. Patrick has offered to convene a state level group to look at the status of PD across the state to provide guidance in the development of PD. Deborah said she provides PD and has to document it, but no way to track its effectiveness. We need a vehicle to assure the PD will have an actual impact. We need to provide PD around context and around using end of grade span expectations connection to building curriculum. Ellie mentioned the factor that self-generated staff development tends to be most effective. Bonnie suggested that folks look at CALL's website for an example of such an integrated model www.umaine.edu/call. Francis suggested that we target the impact to the groups that will be most directly affected to see how effective the PD is (e.g. focus curriculum development PD towards those responsible for

developing curriculum). Karoldene suggested that all teachers be involved for the purpose of buy in. Perhaps the level of intensity of involvement will be part of it. Josh suggested that we make use of technology (on-line. DVDs etc.). Then the district takes responsibility for how it is used. Ellen suggests that this issue is extremely important, it is not our task to hold individuals accountable, but somewhere the accountability has to be called for. Standards for PD are readily available. Tom urged the more direct communication with the classroom teachers the better. But it's more than information and dissemination thereof. PD has to be seen as more valuable and purposeful. Ellie suggested pulling from teacher questions to develop PD. Becky commented on the importance of the social construction of knowledge, give teachers time to confer, but that different district will have different needs. Variety of venues for ongoing professional development. Broadly based information that targets specific local needs and provides context for the professional development. Teachers and administrators need to be modeling the learning process that the students are experiencing in the classroom. Francis noted that we do have history on our side in that the Standards have been around for ten years now.

- Jon felt that the SAT inclusion will have an impact on the assessment and needs to be addressed for the impact statement.
- Tom offered that it is important that new directions and legislation be out and available ahead of the implementation.
- Curriculum

LUNCH 12:07 with reading material provided "Designing Effective Learning Experiences in School."

2. Review of document continues with Instructional Context [review of draft of "Designing Effective Learning Experiences in School."]

- The section on Designing Effective Classrooms is a blending of Jim and Paige's work/research and recommendations from the instructional context group. The document is still a draft. Becky was concerned that the "what" of teaching isn't as constant as the document says. Ellie suggested starting with 3 vignettes of how teachers could teach the same subject in different classrooms. Ellen suggested linking to national standards information www.nbpts.org. Tom suggested not publishing the links because they change. They should be included separately. Josh pointed out "environment" versus "context" language. Francis commented the introduction is still somewhat negative, could be more positive. He is struggling with the appendix, may seem too limited. It's a good resource but may be better placed else where. Have a section where teachers and practitioners could submit other resources. The content includes most if not all of the components of adult education's curriculum framework. Ellen appreciated the comment on p.2 that this is not the ALL of it. Jon G. felt that this does tie very closely to the real world and the world of work, and will be useful in the implementation of the MLR and

the general understanding of it. John W. felt the document was good on subject-centered, but a little weak in the area of cross-discipline opportunities (the recommendations portion of the document). Deborah and John commented about the possibility of putting a MLR component into a learning opportunity and showing how it might look in the different contexts. Josh talked about including learning styles and other factors in the picture. Nancy questioned about how students who experience a specific type of learning (such as project-based) perform when in another teaching/learning context. She was also concerned about the acceptance of some of the new ideas by veteran teachers, how it would play out in pre-service teaching, and how it would affect the novice teacher-mentor relationship. Jon said he felt that the contextual learning is very important for the learning a person does once s/he is out of the school setting. Ellie raised the concern of how overworked teachers can find time and energy to differentiate instruction. Ellen followed up with the question that if this is about enabling access to the MLR, what is there about the larger context and differentiated instruction world that needs to precede this document? Nancy felt this document is implement-able in the classroom, and that there are other issues that affect school and districts. Francis harkened back to our previous meeting discussion about the parallel document(s) that accompany the MLR. Anita shared that the Instructional Context group will include the creation of case studies. Ellie spoke to the 4-components of the framework, not certain about the direction of that part, here is it to be applied and how. Suggestions came up for venues and formats for this. This will continue to be part of our continuing discussion.

Work Session: Revisions to the Guiding Principles

Anita realized that the Advisory Group could be the primary work group for the review of the Guiding Principles and asked if the group would be willing. We said “go for it!”

Anita handed out the “Skills and Content Essential for 21st Century Success” document for us. We will be considering how this document would fit with the page 3 list in the Purple Book.

The feedback was recorded and will be incorporated into a next draft. We started this work by reading pages 32 to 39 in the Framework document, by Dr. Eunice Askov, for the NIFL workplace literacy project. Then we broke into small work groups. Anita will take input and draft a new version for the group. Redrafting-Overall feeling was that document needs to be written more accessibly for students and their parents.

The following are reading for reading later:

1. Anita shared an article by Paul Stilton-Sylvester (UPenn) who researched educational skills with work skills around problem solving. Students are provided scaffolding and process in schools while workers in workplace are

required to problem solve in a more holistic venue (authentic context, no scaffold). We will get this article electronically for us.

2. Anita handed out a “Framework for Developing Workplace Literacy Skills” article.

3. Anita also handed out a document about using the guiding principles as the scaffold for the performance indicators of the content areas.

NEXT TIME:

1. Implications for content area panel work- Lexile language has not come up in our document yet, but the national experts wondered if we were planning to include it, and the group said yes.

Nancy Perkins will be the recorder for the next meeting.

3:07 meeting adjourned.